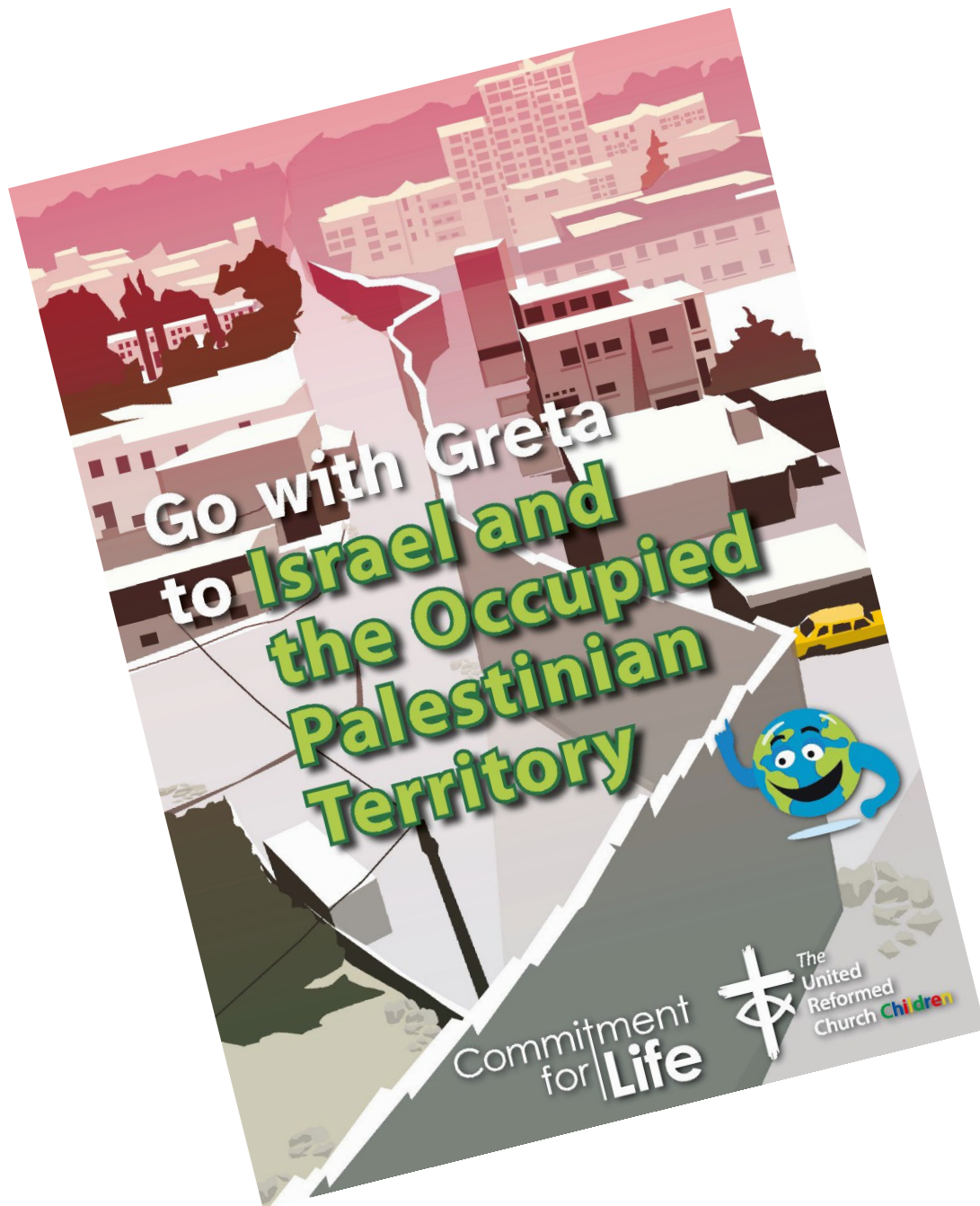




Go with Greta to
Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territory



**Supplementary sessions for younger children
(to use in conjunction with the main resource)**



Session 1 – Here we are

Intro Play a game of musical chairs. How do you feel when a chair is taken away? What about when two people want one chair? How do you play? Who wins – maybe the fastest, maybe the strongest, maybe the cheekiest?

We are going to explore a country where two lots of people want the same land and both lots call it their home. There are lots of people and not enough space for them to live side by side, just like when we're playing musical chairs and there's not enough room on the chair.

The country has a long name. Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territory (IOPT). Let's look at a map together. Can you see the sea? What about rivers? There are mountains in the North and desert in the South.

Bible link – Genesis 13:9-12 Abram and Lot could be replaced with Isaiah 32:18

My people will live in peaceful places. They will have safe homes. They will live in calm places of rest.

Prayer – Thank you, God, for our homes. We pray for everyone who worries about having somewhere safe to live. Amen.

Active prayer – Olive oil is made in IOPT. Anointing means putting oil on someone's head or hand when you bless them. Blessing means asking God to take care of them. Use a bowl with a little olive oil in it and some cotton buds. Dip the cotton bud into the oil and use it to draw a smiley face on each other's hands. This is a prayer, asking God to bless our friends.

Game – Water is very precious in IOPT. Some people have a lot and some people don't have enough. Have two buckets at the end of the room for each team, one with water in and one without. In turn, run to the buckets, carrying a sponge. Dip the sponge in the water and then wring it out over the other bucket. Then run back to the team carrying the sponge and hand it over to the next runner. Which team has the most water after five minutes?

Variation – if the children seem able to cope with unfairness, give one team a really big sponge and one team a very small sponge. Do they still want to play? How could you make the game fair?

Activity – Using a big printed map of IOPT, build it up together. Glue on screwed up blue tissue paper or something similar for the sea and lakes. Use upturned egg-box pieces to make mountains in the North and put some bits of paper or white glitter on top to represent snow. Glue some sand onto the area in the south where there's desert. Around the Galilee area, put some green felt to represent the fertile lands. Use people cut out of two different colours of plasticine or made out of two different colours of pipecleaner (not any type of skin coloured) and position them in the areas of IOPT, saying "This is MY home" as you place each down. Surround the map with pictures of animals and birds that live there, and of olive trees.

Greta wonders – What do you like about your home?
What makes your home special?
Is there anything that everyone's home should have?

Action point - How much water do you need? Ask all the children to guess how many times a day they use water and how much they use – perhaps have some measuring jugs or different sized containers to help them guess. Make a chart and keep a record of when you use water in your house for a whole day. Draw a water droplet or put a sticker on the chart every time you turn a tap on or flush the toilet and add up how many times that comes to. Maybe your family could join in. Do you ever waste water?



Session 2 – Bible Land /Holy Land

Intro – Do you know the names of any special places in the Bible? Do you know where Jesus was born? Can you remember any special buildings in the Bible? Jesus grew up in the area we now call Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territory (IOPT).

Powerpoint of children of different religions. In IOPT, some children are Muslim, some children are Jews and some children are Christian. Some children don't have any religion or have something different, but most are one of these three.

Bible link – Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength and love your neighbour as yourself (Luke 10: 26?)

Prayer – Help us remember that Jesus isn't just a story. He lived and grew up just like we do and knows what it's like to be a child like us. Help us to be good friends of Jesus in all we do and say.

Active prayer – Hold a blow-up globe. Throw it back and forth between you and, if you catch it, say something you want to say thank you, sorry or please to God about. Remember that there are children all round the world just like us, and that we can hear their story.

Game – Let's play a game where we help each other. EITHER take it in turns to run to a big piece of paper and contribute something to a drawing of the seaside or a farm. The team could suggest what to draw, but you can only draw one thing. Then run back and send the next member of the team to draw. When everyone has contributed at least once, put the pictures up on the wall and admire them together.

OR play a stepping stones game. Give each team two sheets of paper. The first child stands on the first one and a team member moves the next one so that the child can step onto it. They then move the first piece of paper round ready for the child to take another step. How quickly can the team cross from one side of the room to the other?

Activity – Many holy buildings started out just as a pile of stones to mark a special place. Decorate some stones/pebbles with pictures and words of things that are special to you (an adult may want to paint these white in advance to make a good surface to draw or paint on). Pile them up together and take a photo. If you are in a church building, you might want to go through and see the table which is central in the building (if there is one) and explain that the piles of stones were often replaced with a big stone or table called an altar, and a building built up around it called a temple, a shrine or a church.

Greta wonders – What buildings or places are special to you?

Do you find it hard or easy to share things that are precious to you?

Why do people sometimes find it hard to share?

Action point – Can you find a way to share something that's special to you with someone else? It doesn't have to be your most precious thing – that might be too difficult – but share something that's a bit special, or maybe invite someone to come with you to a special place. There are lots of special places in IOPT the people in charge don't want to share them.



Session 3 – Childhood in IOPT

Intro Do you remember when we played musical chairs and we made a model to show the Israelis and the Palestinians trying to share the same land? Do we find it easy to share our space? What happens when children don't want to share? Sometimes they hide things away so the others can't get to them. Sometimes they even fight. Adults sometimes do that too. The leaders of the Israelis want more land for their people, so they push and push into the land that the Palestinian people are in and try to keep it as their own. Many of the Palestinian people end up without anywhere to live and some people fight back to try to stop the Israeli army taking over. (Use the model the children made to illustrate this). The Israeli leaders are building a huge wall between the two areas.

Children in IOPT don't get to play together or even really meet each other. Sometimes there is fighting around where they live and go to school, which can be scary.

Bible link – Mark 10: 13-14 People bringing children to Jesus.

Prayer – God, thank you that you love children and that we can bring our prayers to you. Thank you for fun and friendship, families and learning, games and sharing – the things all children enjoy, wherever they live. Help children everywhere to get along with each other. Amen.

Active prayer – Grapes are a fruit that are grown in this area. Use bunches of pre-washed red and white grapes. Remember that grapes are a choking hazard and need to be cut in half lengthways for small children to eat. Look at the bunch of grapes and remember that God gives the world good things and has provided everything we need. Say thank you to God. Share the grapes out amongst the children and adults so everyone gets a fair share. Ask God to help all people share fairly the things that we all need to live.

Game – Play 'Fishermen', rolling the ball with your hands to try and hit someone else's legs. This is a game children in Palestine like to play. See Go with Greta for details on how to play.

Activity – Draw round one of the group on a large piece of paper (e.g. wallpaper or a roll of drawing paper). Inside the image draw or stick pictures of all the things that all children like doing – e.g. eating, playing with various toys, being with friends, learning, playing outside....) Ask, do you think this child is Israeli or Palestinian? How can you tell?

Make a dreidel (a toy that a Jewish child might play with) <https://www.pinterest.com/pin/chanukah-on-the-net-dreidle-pattern--283023157808165068/>

and a peg-leg camel (camel toys are a popular craft in Palestine)



Greta wonders – What does a normal day look like for you?

How can we use friendship to help bring peace?

Do you think the world would be different if children were in charge?

Action point - Watch <https://youtu.be/IVereHvH8nc> There is a special school in Israel where Israeli and Palestinian children DO get to spend time together, to play together and to learn together. When they get together, they find that they get on much better. How many of the things they would change do you agree with? What would YOU change if YOU were in charge?



Session 4 – Challenges

Intro Do you remember when we made our model of Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territory (IOPT)? Both groups of people wanted the same land as their home, so they fought and pushed and then the strongest side built a wall. Let's build a wall and see what it's like to live somewhere like that.

Use boxes or chairs to build a small wall across the room, with some children on one side and some on the other. Leave a space in the middle for a checkpoint, staffed by a leader. Get the children to make a box into a hospital building and then discuss where it should be, which side of the wall. The leader should put it in the Israeli side. Do the same with a box for the school and a box for an office. See how the children feel – is this fair? Get two children to race to school. Get two to race to the hospital? Does the wall make a difference?

Now get the leader to stand at the checkpoint and say that this is a soldier (they could wear a soldier's hat) Do the race again, but this time the children from the Palestinian side have to answer two questions from the leader – what is your name? where are you going? How does this feel?

Swap sides (so that the children playing the role of Palestinians don't get too despondent!)

Now let's think about another challenge for children. Give everyone a paper cup with some squash in the bottom. Have some large bottles ready full of water. Give the children on the Israeli side a bottle of water and say that they should pour it out so that everyone on their side gets a fair share. Make sure you have more water than the children on that side will need. When they've finished, get them to pass the remains of the bottle they're using to the children on the Palestinian side and tell them to pour it out so that everyone on their side gets a fair share. If they indicate that they want the water in the spare bottles too, explain that you can't give those out as the Israeli side might get thirsty later!!!! Prepare for a riot!

So some things are the same for Israeli children and Palestinian children, and some things are different.

Bible link – Psalm 91: 2

Prayer – Dear God, thank you that we can get from place to place safely and easily and that we have water whenever we need it. We pray for peace in Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territory so that everyone can live side by side and share resources fairly. Amen

Active prayer – Using boxes or lego, or painting a piece of paper with sponges to make a brick pattern, create a "wall" and use post it notes to "graffiti" the wall with messages to God. You could knock your wall down with a big AMEN.

Game – Fill the bucket (From Go with Greta)

Activity – Paint some pictures with water on the floor outside, either using paint brushes or using squirty bottles. OR play with Jenga bricks, building a wall and knocking it down again. OR use mud to make some faces of children and stick them on the outside wall of the building.

Greta wonders – What kind of things make you a bit scared or worried and what helps you feel more confident or safe?

What might it feel like to have more of something or less of something than someone else?

Does anyone take you to school? How do you feel when you've got a friend or a grown-up with you?

Action point – There are people from the EAPPI who walk to school with Palestinian children to help them feel safe. Say thank you to all the people who help you feel safe every day. Maybe make a thank you card to give to them, or to send to the EAPPI volunteers (PO Box 741, Jerusalem 91000) to thank them for helping other children feel safer.



Session 5 Peacemakers

Intro The children of Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territory (IOPT) live in the same country but often do not meet each other. They live in a land where many adults fight over land and the resources and life can be difficult for some. When things are tough, we feel stronger when others stand with us and help us speak up about what's happening.

Pick the child with the quietest voice and get them to say "let's make things fair" while all the others are walking round the room saying "natter, natter, natter" repeatedly. The quiet child should tag another child and they should hold hands, saying "let's make things fair" together. They should tag a third child and so on, until their voices are much louder than the others., and until everyone is saying "let's make things fair" together. We become peacemakers when we help others be heard and bring people together.

There are lots of people, both in Israel and the OPT who are trying to bring peace by helping voices be heard, by standing alongside people to point out when things aren't fair, by bringing people together and helping them get to know one another, by praying, by speaking out. In our church (the URC) in the UK we try to say that problems aren't solved by hurting people, whoever you are; that everyone should be treated fairly; that we should speak out when we see that things are not right; and that we can help people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory by trying to check where the things we buy are made or produced.

I wonder what you think peace is?

Peace doesn't mean looking the same, liking the same things, doing the same things, agreeing about everything. It means finding a way to listen to each other, to live together and play together and learn together and work together and care about each other. How can we help that happen?

There is a school where Israeli and Arab children learn and play together. It's called Oasis of Peace and you can hear about it here <https://youtu.be/HASKZohirwM> . The children of the school made a big poster calling for peace in their country. They want to play together and learn together, not to be frightened because there is fighting all around them and people say they shouldn't mix.



Bible link – Matthew 5:9 "Happy are those who work for peace;
God will call them his children! (Good News Bible)

Prayer – Jesus, thank you that your way is the way of peace. We want to help bring peace too, by what we do and say. Be with those who help to build peace in Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territory. Amen.

Active prayer – Pray with bubbles – see Go with Greta OR teach the group to pass the peace by shaking hands with each other and saying "Peace be with you."



Game – Matkot is an Israeli game about cooperating together. It’s like bat and ball, but you try really hard to help each other keep the ball going back and forth. If you don’t have bats and balls, why not play a team game with balloons. Can you all keep the balloons in the air?

Activity In the Bible, we use a dove as an image when we think of peace. Make a handprint with white paint, with the fingers slightly apart to make the dove’s wings and the thumb sticking out to make the dove’s head. Draw or stick on eyes and a beak, and some bird feet. Draw some leaves in its beak – these are olive leaves which grow in IOPT and are another symbol of peace. Perhaps you could cut out your doves and make some bunting or a mobile to hang up in the church to remind everyone that God said to work for peace.

Greta wonders – Why do you think people build walls? Are they good things or bad things?

What can we do to help bring peace where we are, in our homes, school, church ?

How can you get to know someone better? What would you do if someone joined this group who was a stranger, especially if they were a bit different to you?

Action point - Encourage the grown-ups you know to learn more about IOPT too. Encourage them to make sure, if they buy olives, or things with olive oil in, that they are produced by Palestinians. Ask them to help you write to your MP to say that you care about the children in IOPT and want your MP to help bring peace.



(Photograph by Gianmarco Pisa)